

Fort Des Moines Historic Complex,
Building 71
(Cavalry Stable)
Des Moines
Polk County
Iowa

HABS No. IA-121-0

HABS
IOWA,
77-DESMO,
24-0-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

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Building No. 71. Stable

Building No. 71, fronting on Thayer Street, was completed on February 24, 1905, at a cost of \$18,865.24. Composed of brick walls resting on a foundation of stone and concrete, the structure had a slate roof and measured 67 feet wide by 165 feet long. The brick was joined in running bond using red-pigmented mortar. Built according to plan 139 in the Quartermaster General's office, the stable had capacity for ninety horses. It had a gable roof topped by a monitor at the ridge containing paired 9-light windows alternating with paired louvered ventilators. Each side had sixteen double hung windows, while in front and rear were two double-wide sliding doors. Besides the doors, each end contained five double hung windows. All windows had 3-course segmental arches and limestone lug sills. Floors consisted of clay, wood, brick, and cement, and interior space was composed of 10,556 square feet. The floor space was divided as follows:

First floor:

Stable room, 64' 10" x 162' 10" (including 4 rooms, 9' 8" x 10' 7";
1 room, 19' 6" x 32')

Loft:

Room, 41' 4" x 44' 6" (including 1 room, 9' 8" x 19' 6")

During and shortly following World War I the structure evidently served as a classroom for training soldiers in electrical engineering. Equipped with electric lighting, and hot air heating, Building No. 71 also had water line and sewer connections. Yearly maintenance and repair costs between its construction and 1922 averaged about \$25.00. In June, 1935, a frame runway, 20 feet by 95 feet, was erected to connect Building No. 71 with Building No. 70 (later replaced by one of brick). Total cost was \$1,415.30. In November, 1937, the stable building

underwent conversion to a garage for the Fourth Signal Company, a project costing \$2,523.33 and requiring the enlargement of the entrances on either end and the installation of steel doors. As remodeled, the building could accommodate forty vehicles at one time.

When the building was converted in 1942 for use as a WAAC barrack, a brick addition 66 feet 6 inches wide by 53 feet long was erected at the rear. This addition had a gable roof covered with asphalt shingles and was practically the same in exterior appearance as Building No. 68. The brick was laid in common bond. On the south end of the addition the porch has since been removed, although concrete piers are present. On the north side of the stable the entrances remain intact, albeit modified for doorways. Windows and doors have been boarded over. The brick walkway running to Building No. 73 was completed in 1942 at the time the rear addition was built. It has an asphalt shingle roof and is similar to that connecting Building Nos. 68 and 70. A large crack runs through the masonry from foundation to roof at the south end of Building No. 71. Overall condition of the vacant structure is poor to fair. (29)

29. Card for Building No. 71. "Historical Record of Buildings." NA, RG 77, Box No. 51. QMG Plan No. 139 was not located in NA, Cartographic Archives Division. The conversion of the stables to a garage was based on "Plan 718-7 or Plan 326-32" for similar work at Fort Francis F. Warren, Wyoming. Office of the Quartermaster General to the Adjutant General, October 1, 1937. NA, RG 94. Central Files, 1926-39, Box No. 2998; Field survey notes, February 20-22, 1987. QMG Plan No. 139 was not located in NA, Cartographic Archives Division.